

**New York State
Public Service Commission**

**Energy Efficiency Portfolio Standard
Case 07-M-0548**

**EPS Regional Roundtables
Report**

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Background

- ❑ The Commission's May 2007 Order establishing the EPS proceeding encouraged public input from all stakeholders
- ❑ The DPS Staff's August 2007 Proposal identified outreach and education as a key principle

O&E Principle

*A comprehensive and effective outreach and education program is the underpinning that will support the success of the EPS initiative. To ensure that **consumers are informed** throughout the development and implementation of the EPS effort, and have **adequate opportunities to participate** in the process and resulting programs, outreach and education must be an integral part of this process.*

O&E & Public Participation Activities

- ❑ EPS Fact Sheet Distributed
- ❑ Consumer updates posted on AskPSC.com
- ❑ Regional Roundtables held to provide residential and business leaders with information on the EPS proceeding and to learn what energy efficiency programs are important, what assistance is needed, and what barriers exist; and how best to educate consumers

Regional Roundtables

- ❑ 9 held across the State for residential, business, low income and environmental justice leaders and advocates
- ❑ 160+ participants represented such groups as CAPs, weatherization groups, housing officials, colleges, building managers, local & state agencies, public officials, Offices of the Aging, utilities, Chambers of Commerce, and others

EPS Regional Meetings

- October 17th - Southern Tier (Johnson City)
 - Residential & Business Advocates
- October 18th – Capital District (Schenectady)
 - Residential & Business Advocates
- October 19th – North Country (Saranac Lake)
 - Residential Low-Income Advocates & Business Advocates
- November 6th – Downstate Region (NYC)
 - Residential Low-Income Advocates & Environmental Justice Advocates
- November 27th – Catskill Region (Loch Sheldrake)
 - Residential Advocates & Community Leaders
- November 30th – Central New York Region (Syracuse)
 - Residential Advocates & Business Owners

Energy Efficiency Program Issues

- Systems Benefit Charge
 - Businesses are leaving due to the Charge
 - Programs funded by it do not work the same in all areas
 - Funds should be pooled to develop better programs

- Programs
 - WAP is too elaborate & should be more flexible; there is an 18-month waiting period; older housing stock (over 40 years old) may not be eligible
 - Consumers just above the poverty level are not eligible for WAP & EmPower
 - Home Performance Program is cumbersome & needs more certified contractors
 - EmPower Program is streamlined and easier
 - Need more coordination between WAP & EmPower
 - Avoid program duplication to lessen confusion & paperwork
 - Increase weatherization funding for fuel change outs (e.g., boilers)
 - Funding is needed for government buildings to do energy efficiency

EE Issues cont.

- Information & Education is needed
 - To encourage consumers to install measures & participate in available programs
 - To educate contractors & energy providers about NYSERDA programs & how they can benefit from them

- Energy efficient appliances & lighting stock should be readily available in stores; educate local merchants to carry supply

- Building Codes & Standards
 - Improvements are needed to encourage energy efficiency
 - There should be legislation requiring the installation of lighting fixtures that are CFL compatible

Suggestions

- Offer dollar-for-dollar tax credits & incentives to those who take energy efficiency measures
- Improve coordination among various programs
- Increase money for existing programs
- Increase funding per household to serve more people
- Increase funding for multi-family buildings over 4 units
- Provide municipalities with access to SBC funds
- Make government buildings more efficient

Low-Income Consumer Issues

- Problems, Barriers & Comments
 - Low-income people do not have upfront funds for energy efficiency measures, and are usually the ones living in older housing stock with greater need
 - Limited program funds available to serve those in need

- Suggestions & Solutions
 - Increase funding for programs targeted to low income
 - Target landlords since low-income tenants may be renters
 - Income guidelines for programs should be more flexible
 - Program providers should work directly with HEAP recipients; require them to take measures
 - Establish a program to give CFLs to low-income

Outreach & Education to Low Income Communities

- Vehicles suggested
 - Mass media – TV most effective
 - Cable TV, public access, radio
 - “How To” and “Ask the Expert” shows
 - Use paid advertising and public service announcements
 - Multi-lingual information is a must
 - Use locally recognizable spokesperson

Outreach & Education - continued

- Messages suggested
 - Keep the message simple and consistent
 - Address misconceptions and objections about energy efficiency upfront
 - Provide balanced information showing benefits & payback periods in dollars, not percentages
 - Include Governor's "15 X 15" goal
 - Focus on externalized costs (e.g., impact on future generations, if no action is taken now)
 - Note benefits for communities (e.g., controlling greenhouse gases, making a better future for our children, etc.)

Outreach & Education - continued

- Community Outreach
 - Host roundtables
 - Work with organizations to distribute information & be a resource
 - Post information on Web sites that are easy to navigate
 - Set up displays & demonstrations at home improvement stores, shopping centers, community centers, etc.
 - Participate in job fairs
 - Establish a county conservation information & assistance position

- Community Training Programs
 - 'Train the Trainer' programs
 - Training programs for 'supers' and landlords in multi-family buildings

Outreach & Education - continued

- Schools Programs
 - Develop a statewide curriculum
 - Distribute information through school newsletters and at PTA meetings
 - Develop college curriculum to train energy service providers
 - Provide financial assistance to schools

Rural Communities Issues

- Focus on specific regions
 - North Country area does not have access to SBC programs
 - Working in rural areas can be burdensome due to traveling; this means there are fewer contractors available
 - Housing stock in North Country is old, so there should be a greater return on efficiency measures
 - Rural businesses need assistance with financing & credit issues
 - Keep in mind the media outlets in various regions

Small Business Issues

- Too busy to pay attention to energy efficiency
- Don't know about programs
- Don't qualify for programs
- Cash-flow problems
- "On-the-bill" financing programs; option to help those with credit problems
- One-stop shopping program – info on Small Business Install Program, Flex Tech, etc.

Large Business Issues

- ❑ Although very sophisticated, could use more assistance & information about energy efficiency and conservation programs
- ❑ View and promote energy efficiency programs as economic development programs
- ❑ Provide case studies of successful programs
- ❑ Disseminate information through regional & local trade publications, business periodicals and existing organizations

Environmental Justice (EJ) Issues

- ❑ Environmental impacts are heavier in communities of color and low-income communities
- ❑ “Climate change” is the gravy train bypassing EJ neighborhoods
- ❑ Shop any EPS recommendations through these neighborhoods
- ❑ Undertake a major data collection effort to obtain information to use in making informed decisions in low-income communities and communities of color
- ❑ Employ Energy Use Mapping, in the context of all environmental burdens (e.g., power plants, water treatment plants, waste facilities, etc.) to determine how & where funds should be allocated in these communities
- ❑ Measure impacts & benefits of existing programs

Environmental Justice Issues- continued

- Impact of power plants (“the big elephant in the room”) on low-income communities; no incentives to phase them out, but energy efficiency is useful if it can do this
- Educational efforts best received from groups in the communities - use existing infrastructure
- Information in multiple languages (e.g., Spanish, Chinese, Korean, etc.) and in various forms (e.g., written and Web) – downstate issue
- Messages should stress the link between carbon & pollutants and the impacts on these communities

Environmental Justice Issues- continued

- Training & workforce development needed
 - Much of the new energy efficiency technology has not reached EJ communities
 - Technical training programs are not available in local high schools and colleges
 - Local education and training programs will lead to green energy job opportunities

Miscellaneous Issues

- Compact Fluorescent Lighting
 - Greater marketing needed to increase use
 - Information needed about proper disposal
 - Need to encourage availability in numerous stores

- Renewable Energy
 - Link renewables and energy efficiency efforts
 - Payback period is too long (15-30 years)
 - Tax credits for solar panels
 - Building construction standards are needed in the solar industry
 - Incentives are needed to go green

Conclusion

- ❑ All participants agree – the “15 X 15” goal is very important
- ❑ To reach the goal:
 - Provide information about available energy efficiency programs & services
 - Make programs easy to access
 - Make more funding available
 - Provide communities and businesses the opportunity to have a voice in the design of energy efficiency programs
 - Reach out to all communities & businesses through multiple means and with consistent and easy to understand messages
 - Continue the dialogue

Next Steps

- ❑ Continue to provide information on the EPS proceeding
 - ❑ Continue to seek input on key recommendations in the EPS case
 - ❑ Share input received in order to inform decision makers
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- ❑ For more information, contact Pamela Carter at pamela_carter@dps.state.ny.us